



March 4, 2009

Dennis Alexander
State Conservationist
USDA-NRCS
6200 Jefferson Street, NE.
Suite 305
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87109-3734

Dear Dennis Alexander,

The National Organization of Professional Hispanic Natural Resources Conservation Service Employees (NOPHNRCSE) is proud to sponsor for the second time, the **2009 Hispanic Farmer/Rancher Conservation Award**. The award is presented to a farmer or rancher that is making exceptional efforts and exhibits the highest commitment to conserving, enhancing, maintaining, or protecting our natural resources. The farmer or rancher does not need to be Hispanic to qualify for this award but show a commitment to conservation of our natural resources.

This letter is an invitation to submit nominations of farmers or ranchers in your state or area to compete for this honor in 2009. The detailed criteria and nomination form are attached for your review and distribution to those interested. Nominations will be accepted until May 30, 2009.

The nominees will be judged on conservation as a whole on their farm or ranch and the impact they have on the community, their conservation leadership activities, the economic viability of their operation contributing to the quality of life, and the quality of the presentation portraying their story of success.

The award recipients will be our guest at the Ray T. Margo Luncheon where they will be recognized and presented with a plaque. Their expenses for travel, lodging and meals will be covered by NOPHNRCSE. This year's NOPHNRCSE training conference is scheduled to be held on August 4-6, 2009 in Philadelphia, PA. More details will be forthcoming as they are finalized.

For questions contact Edwin Almodovar, Program Committee Chair, at edwin.almodovar@ny.usda.gov, (585-343-3664 x2300).

Thank you in advance for your nomination and interest in recognizing the results of hard work and dedication to a productive agriculture sector and high-quality environment.

Sincerely,

/S/ LUIS A. HERNANDEZ
LUIS A. HERNANDEZ
NOPHNRCSE President



**“Hispanic Farmer/Rancher Conservation Award”
2009 Nomination Form**

To be eligible for this award, the nominee must meet the NRCS definition for Small Farmer /Rancher.

Name: _____ **State Represented:** _____

Address: _____ **City/State/Zip:** _____

Number of acres in farming operation: _____

Number of acres controlled: _____

Main Farming Enterprise: _____

Does the individual have a Natural Resources Conservation / Ag Water Quality / Forest Stewardship Plan?

Has the individual participated in USDA Programs / State Agency / Local Programs?

List the conservation practices, both structural and management systems, installed on the agricultural operation represented in /or by this group over the last five years:

In 300 words or less, explain why this individual should be recognized as the NOPHNCSE Hispanic Farmer / Rancher of the Year. (Attach additional sheets if necessary)

Please return completed form, supporting documentation and the video tape, CD, DVD or high quality power point presentation to Edwin Almodovar at the address listed below.

Note: Nominations should be received no later than May 30, 2009

JUDGING CRITERIA: (The selection process will include the following criteria listed below. However, unique circumstances will be given appropriate consideration. This award is open to all small farmers and ranchers.)

MAXIMUM

POINTS

- **Quality of presentation (video, CD, DVD or high quality power point)..... 10 points**
 - a) Does the production provide good audio, transitions, color and clarity?
 - b) Are proper credits shown?
 - c) Is it useful for transferring ideas to other farmers?
 - d) Has the presentation been edited with interesting scenes, not just a "talking head"?
 - e) Maximum allowable time for presentation is 5 minutes.

Note: For special review, submit product by May 30, 2009. The purpose of this review is to ensure that the product can be reviewed by the committee or adequate time to notify states when their product received other major damage. The committee feels that the quality of the presentation will enhance the quality of the overall program during the banquet.

- **Conservation on the farm..... 30 points**
 - a) Does the landowner have a whole plan? If not, what percentage is planned?
 - b) Are planned and / or conservation practices consistent with a complete resource management system?
 - c) Are operation management and maintenance carried out on a regular basis?
- **Impact on the community.....20 points**
 - a) Do planned and / or applied practices prevent soil and / or chemical runoff from leaving the farm?
 - b) Are streams and other water courses adequately buffered?
 - c) Is adequate consideration given to air quality?
 - d) Does the operation provide produce / products for local use?
- **Conservation Involving Agriculture Leadership..... 20 points**
 - a) Address any participation in: field days, demonstrations and other educational events.
 - b) Address service on boards, committees, and other leadership position.
 - c) Address efforts to stay current with technology.
- **Economic Viability..... 20 points**
 - a) Is the operation specialized or diversified?
 - b) Are any unique or special marketing techniques used?
 - c) Does the operation contribute to quality of life of its members?

Send nomination to: Edwin Almodovar, USDA-NRCS, 29 Liberty Street, Suite 1, Batavia, NY, 14020 Telephone: 585-343-3664 x2300 Email: edwin.almodovar@ny.usda.gov
